

King County Councilmember

District Eight

June 2005



King County Courthouse

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King County

Dow Constantine

Dear Vashon/Maury Islander:

This is a time of change for King County and the Eighth County Council District. County voters have approved a reduction in the number of Council members from 13 to 9, so the Eighth District is due to expand next year to add the Seattle neighborhoods of Pioneer Square, SoDo, Georgetown and the International District, plus the entire cities of Burien and Normandy Park and portions of Tukwila, SeaTac and Beacon Hill.

On Vashon and Maury Islands, volunteers are preparing for the possibility of a natural disaster or terrorist incident that could temporarily isolate the islands from mainland emergency services. In West Seattle, citizens of Admiral, Alki and Harbor Avenue are closely watching proposed changes in flight patterns at King County International Airport. North Highline area residents are discussing governance options, such as incorporation or joining an existing city through annexation. And Burien is taking on the challenge of regional economic and population growth by seeking designation as a regional growth center.

But we must also find time to celebrate. On April 8, representatives of 25 arts, culture, and heritage organizations from throughout District Eight gathered for Arts Day—a recognition of the arts and a networking opportunity for local arts administrators. The first of May saw a record crowd at West Seattle's Seacrest dock as the Elliott Bay Water Taxi kicked off another summer season transporting people to and from the downtown waterfront. And on June 1, hundreds of people gathered in White Center to break ground for Greenbridge, an ambitious redevelopment of the former Park Lake Homes.

This newsletter includes reports on just a few of the myriad activities in our exciting and multi-faceted district. It is an honor to represent this union of dozens of diverse neighborhoods and the citizens who make the Eighth District their home.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with your questions or concerns.

Sincerely

Dow Constantine

Metropolitan King County Councilmember

King County, Washington State preserve 237 acres



A community celebration marked a unique open space preservation collaboration between King County, Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and a half-dozen Vashon and Maury Island community groups.

I joined County Executive Ron Sims and Eric Schroff of the State DNR on February 5 at a ceremony commemorating the transfer of 237 acres of forestland to King County ownership. The lands transferred include the 200-acre Island Center Forest at the headwaters of Judd Creek, the 17-acre Marjorie R. Stanley Wildlife and Wilderness Area, and the 20-acre Dockton Forest.

The most special part of the ceremony was a presentation to Yvonne Kuperberg, widow of the late Vashon activist Joel Kuperberg. The county named the mill yard on the Forest Stewards' property in Joel's honor, in recognition of his commitment to sustainable forestry.



The county and state DNR worked with the Vashon Park District, Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust, Vashon Forest Stewards,

Vashon-Maury Island Audubon, Vashon Mountain Bikers, and Vashon-Maury Island Equestrian Trails Club to coordinate the transfer.

Council approves Vashon emergency planning legislation

The Metropolitan King County Council on April 18 unanimously approved an ordinance that I co-sponsored allowing King County to enter into an interlocal agreement with special districts on Vashon/Maury Islands for emergency management purposes.

This legislation resulted from two and one-half years of disaster planning work by a volunteer coalition of islanders led by Joe Ulatoski. This planning recognizes that Vashon and Maury islands may be isolated from the rest of King County during a catastrophic event, such as an earthquake or a terrorist attack.

Our goal is to enable residents of Vashon/Maury Island to take charge of their ability to communicate, coordinate, and assist each other in the case of a catastrophic event. The final agreement will provide for the activation and operation of a community Emergency Operations Center and community Emergency Management Plan.

County weighs future of north-end ferry parking lot

I have been contacted by several islanders with concerns that the King County Roads Department will sell its parking lot at the north end ferry terminal to Washington State Ferries for use as metered parking.

According to department officials, they have not received a formal offer from the state, nor have they discussed any transfer of the property for more than a year. Any sale of the property to the state would require the approval of the King County Executive and the King County Council.

I am very aware of the impacts of the recent fare increases on islanders and realize that a parking charge would increase the cost of your commute. As this is the only parking lot our Roads Division owns and supports with roads funds, I will be working with the Executive in an effort to make sure this can become a permanent park & ride lot.

Celebrating Arts & Heritage Day

Representatives of 25 arts, culture and heritage organizations from throughout District Eight joined me on April 8 for a forum at ArtsWest in West Seattle.

District Eight Arts Day provided an opportunity for these groups to share news and ideas with me, representatives of 4Culture (the former Cultural Development Association of King County) and each other.

It was a great chance to learn more about each group's latest projects, challenges and plans for the future. As a former ArtsWest and Allied Arts board member, and a lifelong supporter of the arts, it's remarkable to me how the arts and heritage community manages to produce such vital work on such limited resources. Starting with my next district newsletter, we will profile a District Eight arts and heritage group in each issue.

The participants—representing organizations ranging from the Highline Community Symphonic Band (“Burien’s best-kept secret,” according to oboe player Gordon Somerville) to the Vashon-Maury Island Heritage Association—suggested ways that King County can help small arts, culture and heritage groups serve our communities.



At the Green Globe Awards

Dow visits with Vashon Islanders attending the King County Green Globe Awards ceremony at Westlake Park on April 22.



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***Vashon/Maury Island
community news
and information***

If we can be of assistance to you, please contact us

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